



United States Department of the Interior

CALIFORNIA/NEVADA OPERATIONS OFFICE
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In Response Reply To:
CNO-ES

MAY 24 2007

Memorandum

To: Ecological Services Project Leaders, California and Nevada

From: Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office *Steve Skoyson*

Subject: 2007 Fire Season Coordination with Land Management Agencies and Local Fire Authorities

We are now entering the 2007 fire season. While it will hopefully be an uneventful season, the outlook for much of California and Nevada is above normal for significant wildland fire occurrences. Southern California has already experienced several wildfires, and we must be prepared for another challenging season throughout California and Nevada.

To ensure maximum levels of preparedness, I want you and your staffs to take the following steps immediately:

1. Establish or renew regular communications with your local Forest Service Supervisors, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Area Managers, National Park Service Supervisors, Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives, Tribes, California Department of Forestry, county officials, and other agency counterparts that deal with fuel reduction and fire management.
2. Let them know that each of your offices is prepared to assist and expeditiously process Endangered Species Act section 7 consultations on fuel reduction projects, and that fire emergency preparedness is your highest priority.
3. Designate a lead staff person in your office to make sure that proper coordination is carried out as described above. This person will give periodic updates in writing (via e-mail) on a monthly basis describing your office's implementation of the above direction. Please send these reports to Vicki Campbell in the California/Nevada Operations Office.
4. If National Fire Plan section 7 consultation funds become available, be sure to utilize these funds, as appropriate, to support staff working on wildland fire issues.

Through the National Fire Plan Section 7 Counterpart Regulations, the Forest Service and BLM have the ability to complete informal consultation on their own fire projects. If these agencies have questions or need help with this process, I expect your offices to coordinate and assist, expeditiously.

Finally, remember that firefighter and public safety is our first priority in the section 7 consultation process. In emergency situations where federally listed species are involved, please

follow any programmatic guidelines you have put in place or, where appropriate, the emergency consultation process as detailed in the Section 7 Handbook (1998). We need to ensure that there are no miscommunications, and that fire responders do not perceive a need to delay emergency responses while waiting to address federally listed species issues.